

DOTD RESPONSE TO BRIDGE POLICE AUDIT

November 25, 2008

In September, 2008, Counter Technology, Inc. (dba CTI Consulting) completed a comprehensive evaluation of the Crescent City Connection Division bridge police operations at the request of the Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. The major recommendations and the response from DOTD are shown below.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Maintain the CCCD Police Department as a Part of the CCCD The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development should keep the CCCD Police as an integral part of the CCCD. The CCCD perform essential duties in support of safe and efficient operations that promote efficient travel on the bridge and associated roadways as well as the ferry operation. Their scope and quality of services currently enhance rapid response times and prevent extensive delays to traffic on the Crescent City Connection Bridge and prevent secondary accidents.

DOTD Response: DOTD concurs. The CCCD police force has provided an increased service necessary on the CCC bridge to facilitate the movement of traffic.

B. The Development of Formal Agreements

Even though the Police agencies interviewed expressed a voluntary desire to assist the CCCD Police in times of need, it is recommended that CCCD pursue formal MOU's with the surrounding agencies to ensure assistance is available in the future. While the cooperative spirit of the current senior management is commendable, it is critical to memorialize these practices into tangible documents for future administrations of all the participating agencies.

DOTD Response: DOTD does not concur. CCCD has attempted to formalize agreements with local law enforcement in the past; however, turf wars have ensued. CCCD will continue to assist local law enforcement agencies as it has in the past.

C. Homeland Security Training for the CCCD Police

Since the CCCD bridge is the fourth busiest toll bridge in America and presents a target and the ferry operation is subject to current and future maritime security requirements, training should be given to Division Police officers at all levels to enhance their knowledge and capabilities in supporting the Homeland Security program related to their own mission.

DOTD Response: DOTD concurs. The CCCD police force has obtained some homeland security training and continued training will be pursued.

D. Compensation Study

A compensation study should be conducted to determine what fair market compensation should be allocated for the CCCD Police. This should include consideration of granting this Police Department the State Supplemental pay for Peace Officers that most, if not all, other Police Departments receive. Currently, the CCCD is paying a high cost for turnover and training.

DOTD Response: DOTD concurs. CCCD has attempted to get supplemental pay approval for the Police Police Department in the past but Civil Service has not agreed to the additional pay. In addition, the

the police department is a part of a retention study being conducted by DOTD headquarters Human Resources. CCCD will continue to pursue the additional pay.

E. Entry Level Standards

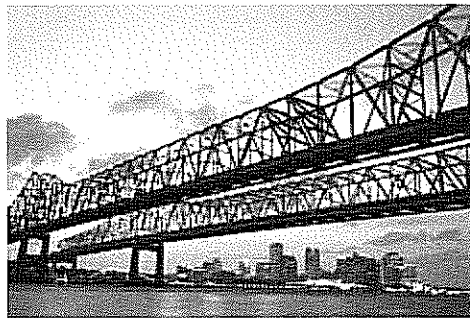
Recruiting standards should be reviewed, including age and education levels of police applicants. The current standard is eighteen years old and no education level is stated, required, or recommended. A requirement for a medical physical and a psychological examination should be considered along with a requirement for basic physical agility and literacy.

DOTD Response: DOTD concurs. The Department of Civil Service has a minimum age requirement of 18 for the position; however, federal law requires that a citizen be 21 years of age to possess a handgun. Since police officers are required to carry handguns, police officers must be 21 years of age to be hired by CCCD. CCCD does require physical and psychological testing on incoming officers. At the time of this audit, CCCD police force had been working on getting accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). While working on the accreditation, and its requirements, realized that psychological testing is required and began working on getting a contract for the testing. CCCD anticipates receipt of its accreditation in approximately 3 months from the time of this response.

FINAL REPORT

September 30, 2008

COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION OF THE CRESCENT CITY CONNECTION DIVISION BRIDGE POLICE OPERATIONS NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

In June 2008 Counter Technology Inc (CTI) was contracted by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to conduct an assessment of the Crescent City Connection Division Police (CCCD Police). Within the scope of work under this contract CTI was asked to assess and report on the following elements of the CCCD Police.

- Charge of the CCCD Police
- Legal Authority
- Agreements with area police authorities
- Justification for CCCD having its own police
- Operational efficiencies or deficiencies within the police force

A. Assessment Methodology

The assessment methodologies included study of documentation and records, site visits, ride-along with a patrol, personal observations, and interviews of CCCD stakeholders and the leadership of the local law enforcement entities impacted by the facilities and operations of the CCCD. The following is a list of some of the key personnel interviewed by the Evaluation Team.

- Mr. Alan LeVasseur, Director, CCCD
- Mr. Randall Paisant, Assistant Director, CCCD
- Ms. Peggy Olivier, Administrative Manager, CCCD
- Marlon Defillo, Assistant Superintendent, New Orleans Police Department
- Dwayne Munch, Chief of Police, Westwego Police Department
- Arthur Lawson, Chief of Police, Gretna Police Department
- Ken Curlee, Captain-Troop B, Louisiana State Police
- Kenneth Pickering, Attorney at Law
- Michael Helmstetter, Chief of Police, CCCD Police Department

B. Areas Studied

Areas studied included the current CCCD Police mission; their capabilities to carry out that mission; and the perceptions and opinions of the Police themselves and other stakeholders who interface with the police. The Evaluation Team looked at their organization, recruitment and hiring practices, training, compensation and other benefits, equipment, facilities, record keeping, work load statistical data, response times, organization structure, retention rates, written plans and policies and procedures.

II. MAJOR FINDINGS

A. Charge of the Police

Specifically, the CCCD Police are responsible for all properties operated by the CCCD and approximately 14 miles of highway comprising the approaches to the Crescent City Connection; and U.S Route 90/U.S. Route 90 Business (Westbank Expressway) interstate east to the Broad Street Overpass of Interstate 10 (Ponchartrain Expressway). They also patrol and have jurisdiction on General Degaulle Drive, Mardi Gras Boulevard, Calliope Street and all surface streets providing access to the bridge. A subsequent legislative act has given the CCCD additional authority and specific jurisdiction within Behrman Memorial Park.

Based on a review of the police procedures and police activity reports provided to the Evaluation Team and interviews with various employees, we determined that the CCCD police officers perform many duties which are not traditionally considered to be police related. The duties identified are:

- Removing stalled cars from the bridge by pushing them with patrol cars
- Escorting and carrying cash deposits to the bank
- Opening and closing the HOV lanes daily
- Riding on the Canal Street ferry from 9:30 pm until midnight
- Standing guard at toll tag violation hearings to maintain order
- Delivering deck hands/toll collectors to each of the three ferries twice daily
- Responding to panic and controlled access alarms

B. Legal Basis of CCCD Police

In evaluating the legal authority of the CCCD Police to serve as Peace Officers, the Evaluation Team researched Louisiana State Statutes and determined that the CCCD Police Department was authorized by an act of the Louisiana Legislature. Specifically, Louisiana Revised Statutes 48:1101.1 gives CCCD Police Officers *"under the direction and control of the secretary, all other powers of sheriffs of Jefferson and St. Bernard parishes and police officers of the cities of New Orleans, Gretna and Westwego in all places and on all premises under the control and jurisdiction of the Crescent City Connection, the Huey P. Long Bridge, the Westbank Expressway, and the ferries and the public ways contiguous thereto."*

As peace officers in the State of Louisiana, Division Police officers are armed and vested with the same powers of other peace officers, as indicated in the paragraph above. The officers, however, are not authorized to work extra/off duty jobs in a law enforcement capacity as police officers from most other agencies do.

The CCCD currently sends all new hires not currently certified as peace officers to the Jefferson Parish Sheriffs Academy for basic police training. This training

consists of fourteen weeks of basic peace officers training, which meets or exceeds the State Peace Officer Standards and Training requirements.

C. Mutual Aid and Other Formal Agreements

At the present time, there are no formal agreements, in the form of Mutual Aid Agreements or Memoranda of Understanding, between the CCCD Police and other law enforcement agencies or between the CCCD and other entities such as the City of New Orleans. This statement is based on the fact that the topic of formal interagency agreements was researched carefully by the CCCD Police for their Accreditation Program.

While there are no formal agreements, it is very clear from the interviews with senior management at the New Orleans Police Department, State Police, Gretna Police Department, and the Westwego Police Department, that these agencies and the CCCD Police have a close and cooperative relationship. Contributing to this positive relationship is the fact that the CCCD is cooperative when called upon by these departments to assist in capturing fleeing suspects who may use the bridge. Indeed, these agencies felt that they gained more from the cooperative relationship than the Division Police.

Based on the premise that the best way to prevent a misunderstanding is to have an understanding, the Evaluation Team has indicated in this report that agreements with these agencies should be formalized where possible, through mutual aid agreements, memoranda of understanding, or other appropriate documents.

D. Justification for CCCD Having Its Own Police

In evaluating the feasibility of other police agencies performing the duties and responsibilities of the CCCD Police, the Team asked State Police and local police agencies if they could do the job as well and cost effectively. These agencies stated that they could not do the job any better and that, given the significant difference in salaries, they could not do it more economically. Additionally, agency personnel stated that if the CCCD Police were dissolved and each local law enforcement agency had to police the portions of the bridges and ferries located in their jurisdictions with their current manpower, they could not meet the response times currently provided by the CCCD Police.

They were adamant that they would need additional resources in manpower and equipment to provide the same level of service currently provided by the Division CCCD Police. Given that the bridges are a primary means of egress and entry into and out of New Orleans, the lack of a timely response to incidents on the bridges would result in a potential gridlock of traffic that would result in many other problems and pose severe safety issues to the public. The Assistant Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department felt that since the motorists in New Orleans are very vocal, they would not hesitate to get on talk

radio and complain if they were not happy or satisfied with traffic conditions on the bridge.

Moreover, the CCCD Police has a special role in the Maritime Security arm of Homeland Security. The CCCD police leadership is well aware of this role and they participate in the local Joint Terrorism Task Force. The importance of this role is evidenced by a past detection and apprehension by the CCCD Police of individuals who were recording the foundation structure of the bridges. A subsequent investigation revealed that some or all of these individuals are on the terrorism watch list. Their action may have prevented a future threat against the safety and well being of these structures.

In sum, the specialization of the CCCD Police and their singular purpose of protection the public who use CCCD facilities and roadways and the CCCD employees make them uniquely qualified for their mission.

E. Operational Efficiencies or Deficiencies of the CCCD Police

The CCCD Police fulfill a vital and necessary role to the safety and well being of the traveling public who utilize the Crescent City Connection Division bridges and ferries as well as vital services to the Division and its employees and facilities. Based on our analysis and the opinions of Division personnel, Division stakeholders, and other municipal and State police agencies, the CCCD Police is currently performing these services in an outstanding and efficient manner.

The CCCD Police have applied for accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). The purpose of CALEA's accreditation program is to improve the delivery of public safety services. This is a difficult and demanding process to go through and requires a strong commitment on the part of a police agency to submit itself to such a detailed analysis by the CALEA.

Without exception, the leadership of the other law enforcement agencies interviewed stated that they found the CCCD Police to be extremely competent and professional and recognized the value of the service provided by the CCCD Police to the traveling public. They all stated that they work closely with the CCCD Police and they have not had any jurisdictional or turf issues with them and that over the years the CCCD Police have provided assistance and aid to them whenever asked to do so. Similarly, CCCD management felt that the Police were very efficient in carrying out of their public safety duties and in safeguarding the safety of Division employees.

III. MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Maintain the CCCD Police Department as a Part of the CCCD

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development should keep the CCCD Police as an integral part of the CCCD. The CCCD perform essential

duties in support of safe and efficient operations that promote efficient travel on the bridge and associated roadways as well as the ferry operation. Their scope and quality of services currently enhance rapid response times and prevent extensive delays to traffic on the Crescent City Connection Bridge and prevent secondary accidents.

B. The Development of Formal Agreements

Even though the Police agencies interviewed expressed a voluntary desire to assist the CCCD Police in times of need, it is recommended that CCCD pursue formal MOU's with the surrounding agencies to ensure assistance is available in the future. While the cooperative spirit of the current senior management is commendable, it is critical to memorialize these practices into tangible documents for future administrations of all the participating agencies.

C. Homeland Security Training for the CCCD Police

Since the CCCD bridge is the fourth busiest toll bridge in America and presents a target and the ferry operation is subject to current and future maritime security requirements, training should be given to Division Police officers at all levels to enhance their knowledge and capabilities in supporting the Homeland Security program related to their own mission.

D. Compensation Study

A compensation study should be conducted to determine what fair market compensation should be allocated for the CCCD Police. This should include consideration of granting this Police Department the State Supplemental pay for Peace Officers that most, if not all, other Police Departments receive. Currently, the CCCD is paying a high cost for turnover and training.

E. Entry Level Standards

Recruiting standards should be reviewed, including age and education levels of police applicants. The current standard is eighteen years old and no education level is stated, required, or recommended. A requirement for a medical physical and a psychological examination should be considered along with a requirement for basic physical agility and literacy.

**COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION OF THE
CRESCENT CITY CONNECTION DIVISION
BRIDGE POLICE OPERATIONS
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**

I. INTRODUCTION

In June 2008, Counter Technology Inc., (CTI) entered into a Contract for Special Services, State Project No. 720-99-0005 with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. The agreement called for CTI to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the Crescent City Connection Department Bridge Police Operations Statewide.

A. Purpose of the Evaluation

Five primary objectives that were set forth in the scope of services for the evaluation are the following:

- The charge of the CCCD Bridge Police
- The legal authority of the CCCD Bridge Police
- Agreements between the CCCD Bridge Police and area police authorities
- Justification for the CCCD having it's own police force
- An examination of the operational efficiencies or deficiencies within the police force

This evaluation is one of four separate audits or studies being conducted of the CCCD focusing on Legislation, Management and Performance, Financial, and Police Operations. A primary focus of this evaluation is a determination of the value of having a separate police department to serve the population utilizing CCCD facilities including the Crescent City Connection Bridge and the three ferry operations.

An evaluation of this type is timely and beneficial for a number of reasons. It is understood that in today's environment of reduced government budgets, responsible management is striving to promote greater productivity and cost savings in the provision of governmental services, including public safety services. In the immediate instance, this cost saving effort is made more difficult by the fact that as populations grow, competing interests for funds allocated to public safety services must be justified. Additionally, because of the increase in service demands, the public safety effort required to maintain safe and efficient operations generally becomes more expensive and burdensome.

B. Evaluation Methodologies

The methodologies used to conduct this study consisted of interviews, observation, and study of documentation.

Interviews were conducted with the following individuals:

- Mr. Alan LeVasseur, Director, CCCD
- Mr. Randall Paisant, Assistant Director, CCCD
- Ms. Peggy Olivier, Administrative Manager, CCCD
- Marlon Defillo, Assistant Superintendent, New Orleans Police Department
- Dwayne Munch, Chief of Police, Westwego Police Department
- Arthur Lawson, Chief of Police, Gretna Police Department
- Ken Curlee, Captain-Troop B, Louisiana State Police
- Kenneth Pickering, Attorney at Law
- Michael Helmstetter, Chief of Police, CCCD Police Department

During the various site visits, observations were made of CCCD facilities, police facilities, patrol vehicles, communications/dispatch center, deployment of personnel, and the patrol environment. Documentation such as complaint records, training records, personnel authorizations, standard operating procedures and personnel salaries were reviewed. Laws governing the creation and authority of the CCCD Police were studied. Statistical documents were reviewed for the last three years detailing the type and number of calls for service the CCCD Police are involved in on a monthly and annual basis. The Team also talked to police officers, supervisors, and mid level managers and other CCCD employees during the study.

C. Areas of Evaluation

To conduct an objective evaluation of the CCCD Police, the CTI Team assessed a variety of areas and issues related to service delivery to the general community served by the CCCD and to its employees as well as areas that directly affect potential cost savings.

These areas include the following:

1. Findings on the mission and responsibilities of the CCCD Police and their capability in carrying out their mission.
2. Perceptions and opinions of CCCD management staff and of senior management of local and state police officials regarding CCCD Police mission capability.
3. Differences between the mission of the local and state police agencies with joint or concurrent jurisdiction and the mission of the CCCD Police.
4. Compliance with State requirements, including training requirements.
5. The question of whether another agency could perform the CCCD Police mission more proficiently or cost-effectively.
6. Recommendations for mission capability enhancement and cost savings.

D. Background and History of the CCCD Police

During construction of the original bridge in 1954, security officers were hired to guard and protect the job site. When the bridge opened in 1958, officers were

retained to patrol and police the bridge and its associated properties under the control of the Mississippi River Authority. Since these officers had no true legal authority at the time, arrangements were made with local jurisdictions to provide the officers with police commissions giving them law enforcement authority in the various jurisdictions within which they patrolled. Over a period of time, as the officer's area of patrol changed as a result of property and operational acquisitions, the officers received special police officer commissions from the New Orleans Police Department, Jefferson Parish, St. Bernard Parish, the Gretna Police Department, and the Westwego Police Department; this practice continued until 1988.

For fifty years, the CCCD Police has continuously functioned as a separate law enforcement entity, providing service to the CCCD. During this time the mission and responsibilities have grown significantly. Because their mission is specific and parochial to areas of interest to the CCCD, their law enforcement function is considered and commonly referred to as non-traditional or niche policing. While the CCCD Police have always had a security mission to fulfill, along with normal law enforcement responsibilities, today's threat of terrorism against high profile assets and maritime operations makes the CCCD Police security mission and responsibilities considerably more demanding.

E. Legal Authority and Mission of the CCCD Police

In 1988, the Louisiana State Legislature officially authorized the Crescent City Connection Police Department under Louisiana Revised Statutes 48:1101.1, granting them the same legal authority and all powers of the sheriffs of Jefferson and St. Bernard Parishes, and police officers of the cities of New Orleans, Gretna and Westwego. A subsequent legislative act gave the CCCD Police jurisdiction in Behrman Memorial Park. This legislative act eliminated the need for officers to carry multiple police commissions from the various jurisdictions within which they have legal responsibilities.

As with most agencies, the CCCD Police have evolved over the years and serve the CCCD in many capacities. While there is no written or official mission statement, a primary charge is to maintain safe and efficient flow of traffic through the Crescent City Connection Bridge and ferry system. Officers patrol the bridge and the 14 miles of connecting roadways, primarily enforcing traffic and state laws that contribute to the safe and efficient flow of traffic such as speeding violations and Driving While Intoxicated laws. Additionally, they patrol the ferry terminals and ride the ferries at night ensuring the safety of patrons and employees. It was noted that the ferry terminals were free from gang style tagging and graffiti.

CCCD officers open and close the HOV lanes daily and post themselves so as to enforce occupancy requirements and issue enforcement citations as required. Two officers escort an accounting employee to the bank each week day and physically carry large sums of money into the secure area of the bank for deposit.

Officers stand guard during toll violation hearings and keep the peace during these proceedings. Officers respond to disturbance calls at the collection booths when disputes arise. And each day, officers deliver and return deck hand/toll collectors to each of the three ferry operations.

In addition to the above, as a result of the events of 9/11, a Homeland Security responsibility has emerged inasmuch as the Crescent City Connection Bridge could be a terrorist target and the fact that the ferry operation is now affected by the Maritime Security and Contingency requirements (MARSEC.) Due to this Homeland Security issue, the CCCD Police has assumed a role on the US Attorney's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).

II. MAJOR FINDINGS AND IMPRESSIONS

As the information that follows indicates, the CCCD Police are in full compliance with all of the requirements of the State Civil Service Commission and Louisiana Peace Officer Standard and Training (POST) and it provides a professional level of service in carrying out its related security and law enforcement missions. As their environment has changed to some degree since Hurricane Katrina, the CCCD Police has adapted to greater levels of traffic traveling to and from the West Bank caused by a significant population shift and the need to provide a greater degree of public safety deterrence to unsafe driving and potential crime. Along these lines, it should be noted that there has never been an attempted robbery or theft reported at the toll plaza or within the facility. In regard to the response to Hurricane Katrina, the evaluation shows that the CCCD Police implemented all required emergency protocols during Katrina and effectively and successfully completing the recovery efforts to return to normal operations quickly.

Moreover, CCCD management has fully supported the mission of the CCCD Police and has supported them in responding quickly and professionally to the operational requirements of the bridge and ferry operation. Although the federal government's nationwide maritime security program has changed and evolved since September 11, 2001 as Homeland Security Administration's threat conditions constantly change, the CCCD Police has adapted in accepting additional responsibilities. CCCD management and CCCD Police management are also addressing the necessary compliance issues with Homeland Security requirements and the Maritime Security and Contingency program (MARSEC).

The CCCD Police has developed a cooperative working relationship with local and state law enforcement agencies. The CTI team observed New Orleans Police and State Police officers in the CCCD parking lot during our visits to the facilities. During our interviews with senior management personnel from these agencies, they confirmed to us that they consider the CCCD Police to be a valuable partner and that they call upon them routinely during the course of pursuing their police mission. These personnel gave specific examples of police pursuits that were able to be terminated because of the CCCD assistance in the successful and safe apprehension of fleeing suspects on the Crescent City Connection Bridge. Similarly,

while no formal agreements or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) exists between the CCCD Police and the surrounding jurisdictions, the representatives interviewed stated their commitment and willingness to respond and assist in times of need.

The training program that all CCCD Police must successfully complete fulfills state and public safety requirements. CCCD Police officers attend an approved police academy to receive their basic training and additional intermediate and advanced training is made available to officers and is evidenced in various police certifications. Officers are also trained in the use of radar, breathalyzer, accident investigation and other related activities. Additionally, CCCD Police management is in the process of obtaining law enforcement accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., (CALEA). This process involves an examination of a police department's internal policies and procedures and compares them to best practices at the national level. CCCD Police management is to be commended for this effort inasmuch as it involves an in depth analysis of each and every police action, policy and procedure. Indeed, an informal survey of area police departments indicated that the CCCD Police is the only agency in the area actively pursuing this accreditation.

In evaluating the legal authority of the CCCD Police to serve as Peace Officers, the Evaluation Team researched Louisiana State Statutes and determined that the CCCD Police Department was authorized by an act of the Louisiana Legislature. Specifically, Louisiana Revised Statutes 48:1101.1 gives CCCD Police Officers *"under the direction and control of the secretary, all other powers of sheriffs of Jefferson and St. Bernard parishes and police officers of the cities of New Orleans, Gretna and Westwego in all places and on all premises under the control and jurisdiction of the Crescent City Connection, the Huey P. Long Bridge, the Westbank Expressway, and the ferries and the public ways contiguous thereto."*

Specifically, the CCCD Police are responsible for all properties operated by the CCCD and approximately 14 miles of highway comprising the approaches to the Crescent City Connection; and U.S Route 90/U.S. Route 90 Business (Westbank Expressway) interstate east to the Broad Street Overpass of Interstate 10 (Ponchartrain Expressway). They also patrol and have jurisdiction on General Degaulle Drive, Mardi Gras Boulevard, Calliope Street and all surface streets providing access to the bridge. A subsequent legislative act has given the CCCD additional authority and specific jurisdiction within Behrman Memorial Park.

In attempting to determine whether or not the CCCD could justify having their own police department, the Evaluation Team closely examined the duties and responsibilities of the officers and found that many of their duties are specific to the safe operation of the Crescent City Connection Bridge and ferry operation and which are not traditional for law enforcement agencies. Moreover, if they did not perform them, the CCCD would have to contract separately for these services or assign responsibility to others within the Division.

Bank escorts, delivering deck hands/toll collectors to ferries, opening and closing HOV lanes and monitoring panic and robbery alarms are among the daily responsibilities of the CCCD Police. Other duties include standing guard at toll and HOV violation hearings to keep order and responding to alarms from the DMV office located on the CCCD premises. Officers also respond to stalled vehicles and have them removed quickly and efficiently. The responsibilities for minimizing delays for the transient population using the bridge and the opening and closing the HOV lanes are critical to the safe operation of the bridge and serve to expedite traffic.

In addition to the non traditional responsibilities, the CCCD Police also perform regular police duties within, and on behalf of, the CCCD. The ability to respond to traffic accidents and clear the road within minutes of their occurrence greatly reduces delays on the bridge and approach roadways. Our conclusion is that the CCCD Police add considerably to the safe and efficient operation of the bridge and ferry system and without a dedicated police force to perform these duties, the CCCD operation would suffer significantly.

In order to identify efficiencies and deficiencies within the police operation, the Evaluation Team evaluated policies and procedures, interviewed personnel including officers and supervisors within the CCCD police and analyzed computer generated, statistical information. The Team monitored such daily activities as the police dispatch center, ferry operations and patrol duties. The statistical data that was reviewed and analyzed included CCCD Police activity reports for 2005, 2006 and 2007. Accounting for the statistical anomalies in 2005 resulting from Hurricane Katrina, the activities of the police are consistent in terms of year-over-year reports. Among the major activities that the CCCD Police respond to are traffic accidents and stalled cars on the bridge and associated roadways. Information gathered during our interviews revealed that the bridge and associated roadways handle approximately 180,000 vehicles per day and that when a lane of the bridge become blocked by an accident or stalled car, the resulting effect is a four minute delay for each minute the lane is blocked. Thus, an immediate response and disposition of the problem is essential to maintain safety and efficient traffic movement.

Annualized data indicates the CCCD responds to and investigates approximately 1500 traffic accidents and over 1100 stalled cars each year. This part of their mission is determined to be critical due to the consequences of stalled cars and traffic accidents such as secondary crashes, and delay factors due to lane closures and overall traffic slow-downs as a result of rubber-necking. The interview with the Assistant Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department revealed that the target response time for the N.O.P.D. to a minor, no injury accident is approximately one hour. He further indicated that the response time could be longer due to the fact that the N.O.P.D. is still understaffed and continues to use the National Guard to supplement its staffing. In sum, the ability of the CCCD Police to respond to these events within a matter of minutes identifies a response efficiency which results in a quantifiable outcome with a tangible result.

III. SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The following are the specific findings and conclusions of the Evaluation Team based on interviews, observations, and studies of documentation and records.

A. Interviews

The following are the summaries of the interviews held with Police officials, CCCD senior and mid management staff and the CCCD contract attorney.

Mr. Alan LeVasseur, Director, CCCD: In his opening remarks, Mr. LeVasseur stated that he had a high degree of confidence in the CCCD Police and that "they provide a service we can't quantify" and "without our police, we could not function efficiently". He stated that unlike another bridge in the area (Sunshine Bridge), the Crescent City Connection Bridge had never been robbed. He attributed this to the presence of the CCCD Police. He stated that while they have the same training and responsibility as other agencies, they are the lowest paid law enforcement agency in the area. It is his belief that the CCCD Police is essential to their operation and that the standards for new hires should be raised. He thinks the standards used should be the same as the State Police.

He also said that few people understood what they did or how they did it. The Team took this to mean that the operation of the CCCD had functioned for many years without much direct oversight from the LDOTD and that the operation was not well understood.

Regarding the police operation, he stated the CCCD police covered multiple jurisdictions and assisted Jefferson Parrish Sheriff's, New Orleans Police and Gretna Police Departments extensively by the work they performed.

He also pointed out that there was no real State Police presence in New Orleans to perform the duties that the CCCD Police performed and that there was only one trooper assigned to the west bank.

He corroborated the point that every one minute of lane closure creates a four minute delay for the bridge. Additionally, he said that the CCCD Police provide incident management and a level of response, averaging about two minutes per incident and that he knew of no other police department that could give them that level of service.

When asked about the management structure, the Director stated that he had a high level of confidence in Chief Helmstetter and that the Chief is very conscientious. He also mentioned that Captain Maggiore was very bright and forward thinking and that the combination of the Chief and Captain Maggiore made for a good management team, that they complemented each other well.

Randall Paisant, Assistant Director, CCCD: Mr. Paisant provided a comprehensive history of the CCCD Police since he has been employed by the

system for many years. He stated that originally they had employed guards in 1954 while the bridge was under construction and that in 1958 they hired police officers because of the amount of money they had to handle. He further stated that at that time, there were only a few police officers on their side of the river. He stated that from 1970 to 1988 a team of seven police officers manually directed traffic across the bridge until they built a second bridge in 1988. Mr. Paisant mentioned that the police had proven to be very valuable to the CCCD and that without them, the CCCD would not be able to get the traffic across the bridge due to the fact that the Police respond to accidents and breakdowns very quickly and get them off of the bridge."

Regarding the practice of using the police for bank escorts, he mentioned that they had used armored car services in the past, but had experienced schedule problems with them. The last armored car service that the CCCD used was Wells Fargo, however due to the fact that they were unable to meet the pick up schedule, the money had to be kept overnight. Toll collections can amount to about \$50,000 each day and substantially more is accumulated for weekend collections. Having the police escort the money to the bank not only ensured the safety of the money, it eliminated the expense of an armored car service and guaranteed the money to be deposited in a timely manner, thus preventing the loss of interest.

When asked if any other police agency could do the same job as the CCCD Police, he felt that the people who pay the tolls deserve a higher level of service and that they received that service because of the police department dedicated to provide that service. He also believed that bridge users would not get the service they need without the CCCD Police and that no other agency except the state police has the jurisdiction although it does not have the manpower to provide such a service.

Peggy Olivier, Administrative Program Director 3, CCCD: In her interview, Ms. Olivier stated that the CCCD Police were routinely requested for crowd control and to maintain order in the toll tag lines. She also said that the officers were present at the violation hearings which were held every other week. She also believed that the CCCD Police are invaluable to the operation. When asked about whether or not the New Orleans Police Department or another area law enforcement agency could perform the same duties, she stated that they do not have enough officers. She said, "The police in this area can't handle what they have to do – they don't have time or staff to handle our issues." and that the New Orleans Police have a three to six hour response time to a traffic accident. Comparatively, according to her, the response time on the part of the CCCD Police is only a few minutes. She confirmed that there has not been a theft or attempted theft at the CCCD and attributed this fact to the presence of the CCCD Police.

Ms. Olivier said that the CCCD needed police presence because of the amount of money they have to deal with. She inferred that without their presence, she believed they would be unprotected and susceptible to the criminal element. She told the Team that in addition to being unreliable, the last armored car service they contracted with was stealing money from the money bags and changing the deposit slips to cover the shortages, but since the officers had taken over the responsibility of escorting the money to the bank, there had been no shortages. When asked how important the police officers were to the operation, she stated that she would consider cutting employees in the administrative section before she would cut the police.

Marlon Defillo, Assistant Superintendent, New Orleans Police Department: The Assistant Superintendent explained that New Orleans was a city divided by a river and thousands of motorists had to use the bridge in their daily commute. He stated that the bridge fell into the City's fourth district and indicated that more residents were moving into the west bank area, thus causing even more traffic on the bridge. He also had high praise for the CCCD Police and the job they do, stating that motorists in New Orleans were very vocal and will not hesitate to get on talk radio and complain if they are not satisfied with conditions.

When asked if other Police Departments could do the job of the CCCD Police he stated that they could, but commented as to whether or not other agencies could do it as well, inferring that response times would suffer. When asked if the New Orleans Police could do the job, he stated that they would have to create a special division to be present at the bridge and would most likely be about the same size as the CCCD police.

Additionally, he said they would also bring in a tow truck to be available to deal with stalled cars. He stated that while he did not know all of their duties, the New Orleans Police officers probably would not be able to perform some of the non-police related functions performed by the CCCD police such as bank escorts and the delivery of personnel to the ferry positions. He mentioned that the New Orleans Police Department had responsibility for a high rise bridge in the City and they dedicated an officer and a tow truck to that bridge each day.

When asked if staffing was currently available to create such a special unit, Mr. Defillo pointed out that the City had just extended the use of the 200 National Guard troops until the end of the year because of the shortage of police officers in New Orleans.

He stated that the CCCD police respond to and work traffic accidents on the bridge and the access and egress roadways associated with the bridge, but they do not work the accident fatalities, the New Orleans Police Department does that. This is consistent with New Orleans Police policy on the interstate and extends to the State Police as well. He stated that the current response time to a minor

accident could be about one hour (anecdotal information suggests that it is much longer than that).

In summary, the interview yielded significant information regarding the capabilities and limitations of the New Orleans Police. They would not be a good candidate to take over the responsibilities of the CCCD Police. Their inability to respond in a timely manner with existing personnel and the reluctance to perform non-police related duties is problematic. The requirement to develop a dedicated unit or detail with the same number of personnel would be costly and due to the fact that they would not perform non-police related duties, the burden to accomplish these tasks would fall to others. Based on experience, the Evaluation Team believes that even if officers were dedicated to the CCCD, they would be drawn away whenever a need arose elsewhere in the City.

Arthur Lawson, Chief of Police, Gretna Police Department: Chief Lawson of the Gretna Police Department was interviewed as his Department has a small part of the Crescent City Connection Bridge and one of the ferry landings within his jurisdiction. He stated that they had a great working relationship with the CCCD Police and his department and had never had a problem with any CCCD Police officer. When asked whether or not his department could take over police responsibilities for the CCCD within their jurisdiction, he commented that they could, but added that if an accident occurred on the bridge in their jurisdiction, they would have to fight traffic to get to the accident as it would back traffic up into and through Gretna. He further stated that since CCCD Police officers were already on the bridge, they could respond more readily to an emergency situation than could his officers.

Dwayne Munch, Chief of Police, Westwego Police Department: Chief Munch was interviewed since part of the Crescent City Bridge falls within the jurisdiction of the City of Westwego. Chief Munch was clear in his response that he does not want to take over police responsibilities for CCCD issues within Westwego. His comments were, "they need to respond in a hurry" and "they clear things up in half the time." The chief stated that he has a good relationship with the CCCD Police and feels comfortable with the current arrangement. He further stated that the only agency that could take over in his opinion was the State Police, but he volunteered that they would not want the job.

Ken Curlee, Captain-Troop B, Louisiana State Police: Captain Ken Curlee, Commander of Troop B, Louisiana State Police was interviewed during the course of this evaluation by the Evaluation Team. Troop B is the only urban State Police Troop in the state of Louisiana, occupying territory within the City of New Orleans. The State Police is the only agency that could overcome all jurisdictional issues associated with the policing of the CCCD operation. Captain Curlee said that as far as he was aware, the state had not indicated a desire to assume responsibility for the bridge. He further stated that as far as he was concerned, the CCCD Police presence was critical to the "bridge". When asked

why, he responded that secondary crashes are often more serious than the original accident and that response time to an accident was critical.

He told us that the State Police do not work accidents in the city limits and cited Louisiana Revised Statutes 32:398 which states in part that:

"The driver of a vehicle involved in an accident resulting in injury or death of any person or property damage in excess of five hundred dollars shall: Immediately, by the quickest means of communications, give notice of the accident to the local police department if the accident occurs within an incorporated city or town..."

When asked about the capabilities of the New Orleans Police Department, he stated that until recently the State Police had supplemented the New Orleans Police Department with 60 State Troopers and as far as he knew, they still had 360 National Guard troops in the City to supplement staffing. In short, he had high praise for the CCCD Police and told us that the State Police had a good working relationship with them.

Kenneth Pickering, Attorney at Law: Mr. Pickering, who is a practicing attorney who provides legal representation to the CCCD, told CTI that he has been involved with the CCCD and the CCCD Police for approximately 25 years. He has worked on various pieces of legislation on behalf of the CCCD and is well known at the state level, having held various appointments over the years. He has worked on various policies for the CCCD Police and has been present and offered his assistance, during numerous major incidents which have occurred over the years. Mr. Pickering informed the Evaluation Team that the bridge and ferries have been used in numerous movies over the years and he is responsible for negotiating the contracts with movie companies. He also had high praise for the CCCD Police and commented that due to the constant patrols within their jurisdiction, they are able to respond quickly to incidents that occur. He added that if local police agencies who took over the police function from the CCCD responded too slowly, it could be detrimental to the CCCD. When asked if in his opinion the CCCD could be held liable for slow response, he stated that he believed the CCCD could be sued if an adequate response time was not met.

When asked if another police agency could perform the duties of the CCCD Police, Mr. Pickering commented that only the State Police had concurrent jurisdiction and the Secretary would have to establish a contract for a special division to perform their duties. When similarly asked about the New Orleans Police Department, he stated that they could not do the work without the development of Memorandums of Understanding with surrounding agencies and/or changes in legislation to provide the authority.

Michael Helmstetter, Chief of Police, CCCD Police Department: Mr. Helmstetter is currently the Chief of Police for the CCCD Police Department and was identified as the Point of Contact for the evaluation in identifying and providing

information to the Evaluation Team. Chief Helmstetter has been employed by the CCCD since 1974, starting out as a police officer and being promoted through the ranks with an ultimate appointment to Chief in 1990. As mentioned earlier regarding the CCCD Police organization and attrition rates, Chief Helmstetter pointed out that the CCCD Police staffing levels had changed significantly over the years and that in the 1980's the Police were authorized 80 positions to handle one bridge and three ferries. Currently, they are authorized 38 positions to cover about 20 miles of roadways, two bridges and three ferries. The CCCD Police currently have seven vacancies. Chief Helmstetter stated he had lost 29 police officers since Hurricane Katrina and the department had gone to twelve hour shifts to maintain sufficient staffing levels to respond to calls for service.

In summary, the persons interviewed were very satisfied with the level of service of the CCCD Police and their performance in carrying out their police and security mission and there were no indications that any other agency could perform or accomplish the police mission to the same proficiency and quality of service as the CCCD Police. .

B. Understanding the Police Mission and the Threat

In order to fully assess and understand the issues and difficulties in assuming the CCCD Police mission by an outside police agency, it is important to be fully cognizant of the complexity of securing and protecting the patrol environment of the Crescent City Connection Division.

According to the information provided to the Evaluation Team, approximately 180,000 vehicles use the bridge on a daily basis. Each lane of the bridge has a theoretical capacity of 2,000 cars per hour. However, during peak times, the lanes on the bridge support over 10,000 vehicles per hour. These are critical statistics that support the necessity for expeditious response to incidents which occur in traffic lanes and in the space between the edge of the lane and the bridge walls. A prime example of the CCCD Police's capabilities is its prompt response to stalled cars and vehicular accidents, the clearing of traffic lanes quickly, and the prevention of secondary accidents. Moreover, the CCCD Police stop over 350 pedestrians from crossing the bridge each year which is significant in preventing serious injury accidents with extensive delay potential. Anecdotally, the CCCD possesses video documentation of a CCCD police officer preventing a suicide attempt from the bridge.

In addition to the traditional police responsibilities, the extensive role of the CCCD Police in performing non police duties is considerable. CCCD police officers performed 246 bank escorts in 2007, which included daily receipts of approximately \$50,000. They delivered deck hand/toll collectors to ferry operations at total of 2,065 times: they ride the Canal Street ferry each night from 9:00 pm to midnight to ensure the safety and security of the patrons and employees; and they monitor and respond to panic and controlled access alarms

on CCCD property. CCCD police officers open and close the HOV lanes of the bridge each day and they monitor and enforce occupancy regulations in the use of the HOV lanes. The Police also assign an officer to be present and maintain order at toll and HOV violation hearings.

The events of 9/11 and the development of Homeland Security programs have altered the CCCD environment and need to be considered in any evaluation of the need for specialized police service. The ferry operation includes a need for compliance with maritime security requirements and the need for contingency planning. Involvement with the US Coast Guard and Homeland Security officials is consistent with good security policy. The CCCD Police is a member of the US Attorney's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and is involved in the Maritime Security Plan for the ferry operation. Consideration should be given to incidents of terrorism and suicide bombings such as those occurring in Israel over the past two years. The security concerns of the CCCD have broadened to include the possibility of incidents that may cause mass casualties.

The Crescent City Connection Bridge is a target for terrorism. The Evaluation Team was shown reports documenting an incident involving the CCCD police detaining individual's video taping the structural aspects of the bridge. These individuals had diagrams and instructions pertaining to the placement of explosive charges for typical bridge structures. The matter was appropriately referred to the FBI for documentation and follow up investigation. Attacks to include the use of Large Vehicle Improvised Explosive Devices (LVIED) are possible and bombings may be accomplished through car, truck or suitcase bombs, and may be intended to disrupt transportation through fear or operational breakdown. Up to now, armed attacks have occurred in Europe and the Middle East only. September 11 has shown, however, that no possibility can be precluded. Weapons, explosives, and chemical biological attacks are possible tools.

The CCCD Police is responsible for protecting the vectors, or pathways, which constitute areas of vulnerability which can be used by an attacker to gain access and smuggle weapons or explosives to an intended target within the CCCD operation. This mission requires a focus and specialization that many in the industry believe can best be accomplished by permanently assigned law enforcement officers.

C. Difference in Missions of the CCCD Police and Traditional Law Enforcement

A significant difference between the responses of these entities to security needs and concerns is the strictness with which the Department of Homeland Security holds regulated parties with maritime interests and operations. For example, the CCCD will be required to implement specific security requirements each time the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) discerns a threat or problem, often with very little latitude in the process for implementation. Second, the

implementation of the changes or upgrades typically must be done immediately with very little time for mobilization or preparation.

Third, failure of the CCCD in its implementation of TSA mandates, or failure to follow an approved security program requirement can result in significant fines. In many cases, federal agents will introduce themselves into an environment and engineer a threat condition to see if there is an appropriate response by the police. As an example, after the Oklahoma City bombing, federal agents placed Ryder Rental trucks at the curbsides of federal buildings and airport terminal buildings to see how quickly first responders would react to the threat.

Fourth, changes to the overall security posture of the CCCD operation must be documented in a written, approved maritime security program and formally approved by the US Coast Guard on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security and the TSA.

On the other hand, the security requirements of state and municipal public safety agencies are different in breadth and method of implementation. While municipal or state law enforcement agencies must take steps to protect the assets and the safety of their citizens, what they protect, how it is protected, and the timeliness of the implementation of their security measures is up to the respective jurisdictions. This is not the case with maritime and airport security issues. Instead, maritime and airport operations are typically required to raise their security levels in response to an increase in the Homeland Security Threat Advisory System, whether an incident or potential threat nationwide involves them or not. It would be difficult in today's tight budget situations for the State Police or the New Orleans Police Department to rapidly increase patrol coverage to the CCCD anytime there is a threat to maritime assets anywhere in the U.S. or even abroad, whereas the CCCD Police possesses that capability.

D. Specialization

Based on a review of the police procedures and police activity reports provided to the Evaluation Team and interviews with various employees, we determined that the CCCD police officers perform many duties which are not traditionally considered to be police related. The duties identified are:

- Removing stalled cars from the bridge by pushing them with patrol cars
- Escorting and carrying cash deposits to the bank
- Opening and closing the HOV lanes daily
- Riding on the Canal Street ferry from 9:30 pm until midnight
- Standing guard at toll tag violation hearings to maintain order
- Delivering deck hands/toll collectors to each of the three ferries twice daily
- Responding to panic and controlled access alarms

It is apparent to the Evaluation Team that the CCCD Police officers recognize and are committed to their security mission and that their job is not just law

enforcement or crime fighting in general, but primarily it is the security, safety, and well being of the traveling public that utilizes the bridge and ferry operations.

Moreover, because of their primary focus on the bridge traffic operation, the CCCD Police are best positioned to respond quickly to incidents and accidents which occur on the bridge.

E. Entry Standards and Training of the CCCD Police

The Evaluation Team's finding is that the CCCD Police meet the State requirements for hiring. The Team still recommends additional screening of applicants as outlined in the Final Recommendations section of this report.

The CCCD currently sends all new hires not currently certified as peace officers to the Jefferson Parish Sheriffs Academy for basic police training. This training consists of fourteen weeks of basic peace officer training, which meets or exceeds the State Peace Officer Standards and Training requirements. This training is then followed by sixteen weeks of Field Officer Training at the CCCD. This training is conducted on the job under the monitoring and supervision of a certified Field Training Officer within the CCCD Police ranks. All CCCD officers meet the State required annual firearms qualification and training requirements.

Additional training is based on a needs requirement where officers of various ranks are offered specialized training in various aspects of law enforcement that would normally be practiced within the CCCD Police area of responsibility. An example of this is Breathalyzer Training for the testing of suspected intoxicated individuals. While they have a number of officers who hold certifications in various specialties, records indicate that non mandatory training has been extremely limited since Hurricane Katrina. This can be attributed to their personnel shortages.

Current staffing shortages are making it difficult to arrange training for all personnel. If their manning continues at the current reduced level this issue will manifest itself in many ways, not the least of which could be a decline in professionalism and service. Our experience is that if you can hire quality people, give them quality training, equipment and facilities, and reward them adequately, they will in turn provide a quality service.

F. Cost Effectiveness and Benefits

One of the key questions regarding the issue of not having a dedicated police department for the CCCD is that of potential cost benefits. If the duties performed by the CCCD Police can be absorbed by the New Orleans Police Department or the Louisiana State Police, the CCCD could potentially benefit by the elimination of the police budget. In our discussions with the Assistant Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department and the Captain of the State Police, each stated that the only way they could assume the police responsibilities would be to create a specialized division with approximately the

same number of personnel. Simply based on the fact that these agencies compensate their officers considerably more than those employed by the CCCD, the Evaluation Team concluded that in terms of personnel, equipment, training, and other factors, the cost would be greater to the CCCD. In addition to the foregoing, the Evaluation Team believes that even if a special detail is assigned to the CCCD, if a significant emergency occurs in the City, the officers assigned to the CCCD might be diverted to the incident. Moreover, in the event of a large scale emergency such as a Gulf Coast storm, many, if not all officers, may be reassigned elsewhere on an ad hoc basis. In consideration of the above and due to the added benefit of having CCCD police officers perform the traditional and non traditional duties, there appears to be a greater benefit in maintaining the CCCD Police organization as is.

G. Staffing Issues

The CCCD Police currently has an authorized strength of thirty eight full time commissioned officers with seven vacancies. This number includes management and line supervision. Over the years, the number of authorized positions has changed. As an example, in 1980 the CCCD Police had a complement of eighty full time positions with responsibility for one bridge and three ferries compared to their current responsibility for two bridges and fourteen miles of roadway, three ferries and one urban park.

The CCCD Police have been fulfilling their duties through more productive measures and practices such as utilizing twelve hour shifts. However, this should be considered a short term measure to minimize the effects of fatigue on effectiveness and safety. The Evaluation Team knows of no current plans to adjust staffing to a level more commensurate with the demands of their duties and responsibilities.

H. Supervision and Management

The Evaluation Team believes the management and supervisory staff of the CCCD Police to be very competent in their administrative and managerial responsibilities. As examples, they thoroughly investigate the background of all applicants who apply for police positions and send cadets to approved police academy training programs. The CCCD Police management is pursuing police department Accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies Inc., (CALEA). This process involves an exhaustive review of all policies and procedures to ensure the department is conforming to industry best practices. CCCD Police management has installed video cameras with audio recording in each of the patrol cars used by officers. Each traffic stop and all violator contact is recorded and archived for future use if necessary.

The ability of the CCCD Police management to implement best practices in the management and operation of the police department coupled with the relationships they have developed with area law enforcement is also significant.

I. Relationship of the CCCD Police with Area Police Agencies

It is very clear from the interviews with senior management at the New Orleans Police Department, State Police, Gretna Police Department, and the Westwego Police Department, that these agencies and the CCCD Police have a close and cooperative relationship. Contributing to this positive relationship is the fact that the CCCD is cooperative when called upon by these departments to assist in capturing fleeing suspects who may use the bridge. While no formal Memorandum of Understanding exists between the CCCD and these agencies, senior staff within these agencies has expressed strong confidence in the ability of the CCCD Police to perform their police mission effectively and professionally.

J. Quality of Service

One of the issues considered in this study is the quality of service rendered by the CCCD Police. As noted earlier, none of the persons interviewed in this project felt that the quality of service was sub-standard, inadequate, or cause for concern. The interviewees included CCCD management, the New Orleans Police Department, the State Police and others as detailed earlier in this report.

CTI's experience in conducting studies in other venues bears out the fact that rotation of municipal, or in some cases, county or state police officers assigned to a special environment (airports, for example) must be handled very carefully. Current rules and practices of some municipal and police departments may require that assignments be made on the basis of seniority and not the qualifications of the officer. In some cases, the police department may transfer officers for certain reasons such as disciplinary problems or medical considerations. As such, the CCCD may end up with police officers who are not qualified or who may not wish to work in the specialized environment of the CCCD.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The following summarizes the findings of the study that forms the basis for the final recommendations:

While the CCCD Police do not have an officially stated Charge or Mission statement, it is understood via policy, procedure and practice that their primary responsibility is the safe and efficient movement of traffic across the Crescent City Connection Bridge and ferry system.

The CCCD Police are in full compliance with all of the requirements of Louisiana state law and the Louisiana Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) and have full legal authority to enforce the laws of the State of Louisiana as well as the jurisdictional authority to enforce municipal ordinance of the Cities of New Orleans, Gretna and Westwego in fulfilling their law enforcement missions.

The CCCD has no formal agreements or Memorandums of Understanding with any of the jurisdictions within which they operate. However, the CCCD Police has

managed considerable outreach and has garnered support in the form of mutual aid from each of the local jurisdictions as well as the State Police and as evidenced by the Evaluation Team's interviews with senior management, each is willing to assist when called upon in lieu of a formal document existing.

Much of this report has identified the specialized functions and unusually responsive nature of the CCCD Police to incidents and accidents. The CCCD handles large sums of cash and has concluded that the primary reason no robberies have occurred in their fifty year history is due to the presence of the CCCD Police. Given the specialized nature of their duties and responsibilities it is unlikely that any other traditional law enforcement agency could perform their duties. The Evaluation Team has concluded that there is sufficient justification for the CCCD to have its own police force. Additionally, interviews indicate a high regard for level of police services rendered and the need to keep the current program under the CCCD Police.

During the course of conducting this study, a number of efficiencies were noted in the CCCD Police operation.

- The highly efficient manner in which the CCCD Police respond to and clear pedestrians, accidents and stalled vehicles from the bridge and roadways.
- Utilizing the police to transport deck hand/toll collector personnel to and from the three ferry operations is efficient and secure inasmuch as the daily toll collections are securely returned to the CCCD offices for the next days' deposit.
- Having police officers bumper push stalled cars from the bridge is both effective and efficient. It saves valuable time and contributes to accident prevention.
- Having officers escort the daily deposits to the bank is dependable, secure and saves the CCCD the cost of an armored car service, which in the past has been plagued with schedule problems and alleged theft.
- Using CCCD police officers to open and close HOV lanes on the Crescent City Connection Bridge is an effective and efficient way to manage the traffic and enforce occupancy requirements.
- Monitoring and responding to panic and controlled access alarms contributes to the safety and well being of the employees of the CCCD.
- Standing guard at toll violation hearings to maintain order provides security to both the employees as well as other citizens attending the hearings.
- Assisting the maintenance personnel by providing patrol car protection at lane closures for maintenance and repair activities insures the safety of CCCD employees.
- Provide escort assistance for Mardi Gras festival activities as well as float escorts, thus preventing traffic problems.
- The Police demonstrate due diligence in running Criminal History Background Checks for all those applying for employment with the CCCD, including toll collectors, maintenance workers and others to ensure those personnel with a responsibility for hiring have accurate information to work with.

The few deficiencies noted during the course of this study centered on the staffing component of the police and their inability to keep regular shift hours for officers. This leads to officer fatigue and other related issues and, combined with the inability to take accrued leave, ultimately will have a detrimental effect on performance. As noted earlier in this report, the CCCD Police officers are working twelve hour shifts and the shortage of personnel also prevents officers from attending regular training classes to maintain proficiency.

The Team found indications that the high attrition rate in the ranks of the police (29 have resigned since Katrina) may primarily be due to compensation. The CCCD is among the lowest compensated police departments in the area. CCCD officers are not allowed to receive the monthly state supplemental pay all other officers generally receive. They do not have "take home" car privileges as do most of the area police officers. And they are not allowed to work police related, outside employment. These factors will ultimately lead to a lower quality of applicant and higher turnover. It will also result in higher administrative costs in the replacement and training of new recruits.

V. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations of the Evaluation Team regarding the CCCD Police.

A. Maintain the CCCD Police Department as a Part of the CCCD

Based on the findings, the Evaluation Team recommends that the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development keep the CCCD Police as an integral part of the CCCD. The CCCD perform essential duties in support of safe and efficient operations. As a component of good customer service, the police provide both tangible and intangible results which promote efficient travel on the bridge and associated roadways as well as the ferry operation.

B. Do not use other Police Agencies to Perform CCCD Police Duties

As referenced in the body of this report, the assimilation of CCCD Police duties into the duties and responsibilities of area law enforcement is not recommended. Response times will suffer and likely result in extensive delays to traffic on the Crescent City Connection Bridge. Our interviews revealed that neither the New Orleans Police Department nor the Louisiana State Police have the staffing to field a special unit or division to assume these responsibilities and neither agency indicated that they would perform any of the non police duties currently assigned to the CCCD Police.

C. The Development of Memorandums of Understanding

Even though the Police agencies interviewed expressed a voluntary desire to assist the CCCD Police in times of need, it is recommended that the CCCD pursue formal MOU's with the surrounding agencies to ensure assistance is available in the future. While the cooperative spirit of the current senior

management is commendable, it is critical to memorialize these practices into tangible documents for future administrations of all the participating agencies.

D. Homeland Security Training for the CCCD Police

As the fourth busiest toll bridge in America, the Crescent City Connection Bridge could be a major terrorist target. Additionally, the ferry operation is subject to maritime security requirements associated with Homeland Security issues and US Coast Guard compliance to security regulations. As the maritime security component matures in the near future, additional duties will become apparent. Contingency planning and coordination with federal authorities will increase. While the senior management of the CCCD recognizes this responsibility as is evidenced by their involvement in the US Attorney's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), Homeland Security training should be given to all officers and supervisors to ensure all personnel are knowledgeable of their responsibilities and for a general awareness of the requirements.

E. Compensation Study

The Team recommends that a compensation study be undertaken to determine what fair market compensation should be allocated for the CCCD Police. This should include consideration of granting this Police Department the State Supplemental pay for Peace Officers that most, if not all, other Police Departments receive. Currently, the CCCD is paying a high cost for turnover and training.

F. Entry Level Standards

Recruiting standards for applicants should be reviewed by appropriate personnel and attention given to the age and education level of police applicants. The current standard is eighteen years old and no education level is stated, required or recommended. Additionally, a requirement for a medical physical and a psychological examination should be considered along with a requirement for basic physical agility and literacy.

G. Police Accreditation Program

The CCCD should continue its efforts for the Accreditation of the CCCD Police. The benefits of the accreditation program include:

- The inherent confidence of CCCD management that the Police program is sound,
- The structure and baseline of operations that the program provides the Police to build upon,
- The adoption of best practices and police standards,
- The impetus on the Police to upgrade their program and operation in its effort to meet and maintain accreditation standards and
- The confidence of other area police agencies in the CCCD police program.